



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
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News Release

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State Board of Health invites the public to share health concerns on June 14 in Pasco

OLYMPIA — What is the appropriate role for government in protecting children's health? How is managed health care affecting you and your community? If you have ideas about these and other health-related questions, you can tell others what you think at an upcoming forum.

The State Board of Health is convening a regional public forum in Pasco on Wednesday June 14 to find out what private individuals, health professionals, and agencies in 10 central Washington counties are concerned about in four general health areas:

1. Environmental health
2. Children's health and well being
3. Access to critical health care services
4. Public health system improvement

Members of the board will chair concurrent discussion sessions on these four topics from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM. During the evening session, from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM, the board will hear additional comments on any of the issues. At the conclusion of the meeting, the co-chairs of each session will present to the entire board the key areas of concern they heard. The event will be at the Trade, Recreation and Agriculture Center (TRAC), 6400 Burden Boulevard, Pasco.

This is an important opportunity for people to tell the board what they think about many of the critical issues in the health field today, regarding both access to health care and what people can do to prevent health problems and reduce the need for health care. Board members expect to be joined by members of the Legislature and representatives from key state agencies such as the Health Care Authority, the Department of Social and Health Services (Medicaid program), the Department of Health, and the Governor's Office.

To help generate ideas, the board has developed suggested questions that participants might want to think about. Examples include:

- What is the appropriate role for government in protecting children's health?
- In your immediate community, what keeps people from being able to get critical health services? What can we do about this?
- What effects has managed care had on the delivery of health care, both for professionals and consumers?
- In your community, have you observed high concentrations of a particular illness that might be linked to an environmental exposure?
- What do you think are the key contributions of public health agencies in your community? Do you think these contributions are well understood?

The invitation to the forum and more detailed lists of suggested questions in the four topic areas are available on the Board of Health's web site at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/SBOH>. The ten counties that will be the focus of the forum are Adams, Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Kittitas, Klickitat, Walla Walla, and Yakima.

The State Board of Health, established in 1889 by the state constitution, provides citizens a forum for the development of public health policy in Washington. Members of the board believe that broad public participation is the best way to ensure government is both vigorous and responsive to their needs.

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